

OCT 25 1967

Approved For Release 2005/01/27 : CIA-RDP75-00149R000700290019-7

Moscow's 'John Smith' Publishes Memoirs of Alleged CIA Spying

By J. Y. Smith

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One John Smith, who says he worked for the State Department before defecting to the Soviet Union, began publishing his memoirs in Moscow yesterday. They are entitled, "I Was an Agent for the CIA."

U.S. officials at home and abroad were reluctant at first to acknowledge that they'd ever heard of John Smith, or at least of the John Smith whose life story began appearing in the weekly Literaturnaya Gazeta.

A spokesman for the American embassy in Moscow was quoted by United Press International as saying that "the only John Smith I know of was subverted by Pocahontas."

The CIA, of course, had no comment. Neither, for the record, did the FBI. It was understood, however, that neither the spooks nor the sleuths had ever "had" Smith, or at least this Smith, and that both were glad of it.

By the end of the day, the State Department acknowledged that it had once employed a John Discoe Smith. A Department spokesman said that John Discoe Smith had signed on Oct. 29, 1950, as a communications clerk at an annual salary of \$2850 and that he had resigned for "personal reasons" on Dec. 29, 1959, when he was making \$5585.

The spokesman added that "there is no information here that John Discoe Smith or another John Smith is in the Soviet Union, is a Soviet citi-

zen or is a defector from the United States. . . . I have no reason to believe that he was ever employed by the CIA."

The mother of John Discoe Smith, contacted by the Associated Press in Braintree, Mass., said: "That's not my boy. He works for the government, but I can't say more."

She said she gets "letters from him all the time" and had received one, mailed in Rome, "within a week." She said her son is married and that his wife and family are in the United States.

It appears, however, that John Discoe Smith, the one-time communication clerk, and John Smith, the Moscow memoirist, had much in common.

In Literaturnaya Gazeta, Smith said he had been born in Quincy, Mass., gone to school at Thayer Academy in nearby Braintree, Mass., worked in the Four Rivers shipyards in Braintree during World War II and then went into the Navy.

After the war, he continued, he attended "Washington University," joined the State Department in 1950 and then went to India. It was there, he said, that he joined the CIA, believing that it "existed to take care of American citizens." His wife, identified in news accounts from Moscow as "Mary London Smith," was said to have assisted him in his spy work.

"Now I am a citizen of this great and human country. I live and work in Moscow."

Part of this tale was corroborated by the State De-

partment and by George Washington University. Officials at the school, reacting to radio accounts of Smith's story, checked their files and found that a John D. Smith from Quincy, Mass., had enrolled in the fall of 1948 and dropped out for "scholastic reasons" in June, 1950.

The State Department said its John Discoe Smith had been born in Quincy, Mass., on March 31, 1926, that he had married a secretary in the Foreign Service named Mary Frances London in 1955 and that his posts aboard included Pretoria, New Delhi and Vienna.

But that still left open the question of whether John Smith had ever worked for the CIA.

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CIA 4.03 - SMITH, JOHN

SMITH, JOHN

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FOR THE CIA"